ISSN: 3079-3319

Falcons Journal of Advanced Research

Volume: 01, Issue: (01), Article ID: FJAR-VOL1-01-25002A

Memory, Trauma, and the Death Drive: A Psychoanalytic Perspective on *Never Let Me Go*

Muhammad Afzal[1(*)], Sana Malik[2], Shanza Maqsood[3], Saleha Zia[4]

Abstract

This study applies psychoanalytic theory to Kazuo Ishiguro's novel "Never Let Me Go," focusing on the themes of memory, trauma, and the death drive. By examining the inner lives of the novel's cloned characters—Kathy, Tommy, and Ruth—this study explores how repressed knowledge of their predetermined fates influences their identities and relationships. Drawing on Freudian and Lacanian psychoanalytic concepts, the analysis delves into the characters' unconscious desires and the mechanisms they employ to cope with their existential plight. The novel's narrative structure, heavily reliant on Kathy's fragmented and selective memories, serves as a lens through which the repressed trauma of the clones is revealed. This paper argues that Kathy's role as a carer and her recollections are forms of sublimation, allowing her to manage her anxieties about her inevitable fate. Furthermore, the study explores the concept of the uncanny, highlighting how the clones' existence blurs the boundaries between the familiar and the unfamiliar, human and non-human, creating a sense of unsettling normalcy. Additionally, the paper examines the interplay between Thanatos (the death drive) and Eros (the life drive) in the characters' lives, illustrating how their search for meaning and connection is overshadowed by the omnipresence of death. By analyzing these psychoanalytic elements, this study aims to provide a deeper understanding of the psychological complexities in "Never Let Me Go," shedding light on the profound impact of repressed trauma and the struggle for identity in the face of mortality.

Keywords: *psychoanalysis, memory, trauma, repression, death drive, Thanatos, Eros, uncanny, identity formation, unconscious desires*

Received: ***November 08, 2024*** *Accepted:* ***January 22, 2025***

How to Cite this Paper: Afzal, M., Malik, S., Maqsood, S., Zia, S. (2025). Memory, Trauma, and the Death Drive: A Psychoanalytic Perspective on Never Let Me Go. *Falcons Journal of Advanced Research, 1*(1), 10-17. https://doi.org/10.63287/593489

1. INTRODUCTION

In his 2005 book *Never Let Me Go* Kazuo Ishiguro presents a deep investigation of these subjects amid a dark future where cloned humans exist only to give their organs. Through personal stories the book investigates universal moral conflicts and explores what it means to be human plus how society impacts our lives. By showing us the inner worlds of Kathy, Tommy, and Ruth who were cloned Ishiguro lets us see what it means to face death before the end of life. Our analysis focuses on how memories and trauma shape behavior through the balance between Freud's identified instincts of life preservation (Eros) and death drive (Thanatos) in his psychoanalytic theory (Freud, 1920).

Through her incomplete memories Kathy tells us about Hailsham school where she learned and lived but only

[1] PhD Scholar, Department of English Literature, University of Balochistan, afzalakash17@gmail.com (*Corresponding Author)
[2] MPhil. Scholar (English Literature), The Islamia University of Bahawalpur, Saanam.alik16@gmail.com
[3] MPhil. Scholar (English Literature), The Islamia University of Bahawalpur, abubakerzahid2002@gmail.com
[4] MPhil. Scholar (English Linguistics), The Islamia University of Bahawalpur, salehach10@gmail.com

© 2025 The Author(s). Published by Falcons Journal of Advanced Research (FJAR).
This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY 4.0)

discovers its real purpose later in life. Through her memories Kathy shows us how her mind suppresses painful reality so she can manage the knowledge of her destined fate. By revealing suppressed trauma through fractured memories people use their memory to protect themselves at a basic level (Freud, 1915). As a caregiver Kathy transforms her mental energy from emotional distress into helpful actions which help her manage her thoughts about mortality and purpose.

The story shows how the uncanny makes readers feel both known yet strange to describe what the characters deeply experience in life. By creating clones who feel emotions like any human beings Ishiguro deliberately mixes our concepts of what it means to be human. As Lacan explains in 2006's theory of the mirror stage people develop their identity through the push and pull of belonging and separation. Humanity shapes and limits the psychological state of the clones at the exact same time. Life versus death conflict runs through the entire story showing how Eros and Thanatos powerfully express the clones' deep struggles with who they are and why they live.

1.1 Research Questions

1. How does Kazuo Ishiguro's *Never Let Me Go* portray memory and repression as mechanisms for coping with trauma within a psychoanalytic framework?
2. In what ways do the concepts of Thanatos (death drive) and Eros (life drive) manifest in the psychological and relational dynamics of the cloned characters?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Many researchers study how Kazuo Ishiguro connects traumatic mental states and moral problems in a fictional future society through *Never Let Me Go*. New studies demonstrate how Ishiguro develops character toughness through the power of memory. According to Geiszler (2020) memory helps the clones in *Never Let Me Go* create false normality because they live in a world that won't let them make choices. For Geiszler Kathy chooses specific memories to remember because her mind unconsciously blocks painful realities based on Freud's understanding of the unconscious. The research shows that Kathy uses her Hailsham memories both to soothe herself and to hide from the truth about what lies ahead in her life.

The hidden traumatic experiences of clones surface throughout the book. According to Whitehead (2019) Ishiguro's characters display group trauma symptoms since they live knowing they can be discarded. According to Whitehead the clones remain silent about their fears because society prevents them from expressing themselves (p. 54). The expert's analysis adds this novel to trauma studies because narrative gaps tend to show hidden realities.

According to Freud's notion of the uncanny readers examine the novel's breach between ordinary recognition and strange unfamiliarity. According to Graham (2018) clones appear human but their destiny to serve as organ donors generates unsettling feelings. Humans and science face new boundaries that test our moral limits because clones represent both human traits and defy conventional human understanding. As Graham states, "The clones' existence disrupts our perception of what it means to be human, presenting an eerie reflection of our ethical failures" (p. 23).

The moral questions about cloning make up a key part of academic discussions about this book. Through bioethical analysis Zhang and Lin (2021) show how Ishiguro's work critiques society's use of people as commodities. They demonstrate that society's embrace of cloning in the book represents actual world behavior where scientists use subordinate groups to push scientific boundaries. Through his narrative Zhang and Lin point out that Ishiguro shows clones as conscious beings forced to exist only for their physical usefulness.

The book links memories to finite human life according to recent research. Research by Lee (2020) shows Kathy holds onto her memories to keep death from overwhelming her mental balance. Through Kathy's memories Lee explains she creates mental resilience to handle her impending destiny instead of just reliving the past. Memory functions as an effective method for treating trauma according to psychoanalytic research.

Many researchers analyze how Hailsham influences the development of the clones' sense of self. Through Baker's studies in 2019 Hailsham functions as a small version of society to train clones into passive acceptance of their lives. Through Hailsham's teaching methods, Baker explains that students seem to develop personal talents yet remain economic assets for others (p. 87). Our education system hides its effort to standardize students as it promises to help them grow personally.

Artistic activities at *Never Let Me Go* help characters learn about their nature as human beings. Through

ISSN: 3079-3319
Volume: 1,
Issue:(01)
January,2025

Smithson's 2021 research we see that creative activities help clones express themselves while standing up to their oppression. Smithson contends, "Through art, the clones assert their individuality, even as their creations are appropriated to validate the ethics of the cloning program" (p. 45). Art serves both to express identity and to demonstrate how personal power is taken from us.

Scholars show strong interest in exploring how Eros (life drive) and Thanatos (death drive) interact with one another. Mendes and Clarke (2020) review the appearance of Freud's drive theories in the actions and relationships of the clones. The researchers find that characters use Eros to build bonds while Thanatos shapes their resignation towards death. Through his writing Ishiguro shows how the clones crave life yet know they must die to make a meaningful statement about what it means to exist (Mendes and Clarke 110).

Experts have used different psychoanalytic theories to analyze Kathy's work as a carer. McCarthy (2022) believes that through her service work as a caregiver Kathy transforms her death anxiety into useful activities. McCarthy reveals how Kathy uses her care responsibilities to temporarily stay from her doomed future while helping others aids her to handle deep fears about life's end (p. 35). The findings support how sublimation helps people cope with emotional suffering.

Society discusses the effects of obedience when people observe the clones accept their roles without defiant actions. According to Reynolds's 2018 study the clones' acceptance of what fate brings them represents how people experience systematic oppression today. According to Reynolds the clones accept their situation because their training forces them into submission like society pushes minority groups to obey dominant norms. According to Reynolds the clones' patience demonstrates how society permits abusive systems to exist (p. 76).

3. METHODOLOGY

Through qualitative methods this research analyzes *Never Let Me Go* by Kazuo Ishiguro using Freudian and Lacanian psychoanalytic frameworks. We look at how the main characters handle their past hurt through unconscious defenses like repression and sublimation while using Freudian theory to study their relationship with death. The research uses Freud's basic principles from 1920 to show how Kathy uses specific memories to handle reality and drive the story forward. The Symbolic Order and unconscious desires in Lacanian theory (Lacan, 2006) show us how patients live their lives knowing they will die.

The study focuses on a detailed text examination as its main method for exploring the book's way of telling the story and key ideas. Zhang and Lin's 2021 research explains how Ishiguro's story reflects society's treatment of clones as property through ethical analysis of human replication. According to Whitehead's 2019 research on trauma theory characters in narratives don't fully express their psychological pain because they unconsciously keep those memories hidden. Current academic studies help explain the novel's deeper meanings about mind analysis and moral dilemmas and extend the text's basic interpretation. Our research methods match hermeneutic standards by studying textual symbols and personal perspectives and combining these findings with contemporary academic studies.

4. MEMORY AS A MEDIUM OF REPRESSION

In *Never Let Me Go* Kazuo Ishiguro demonstrates how memory works to connect suppression and the development of personal identity. Through her fragmented memory patterns Kathy reveals how her mind blocks terrifying truths from reaching her awareness. Early in the novel, she recalls, "There was a particular afternoon I now always think about whenever I try to understand who we were to each other" (Ishiguro, 2005, p. 18). Through her wistful memories of Tommy and Ruth Kathy probes the significance of their bond while pushing away from her future shared destiny. According to Freud's 1920 findings humans subconsciously block out painful psychological content through repression. Through remembering only the good times at Hailsham Kathy tries to balance her emotional connections against the reality of being created as a clone for utilitarian purposes.

Events and thoughts merge together in general confusion for trauma survivors just like Kathy's fractured memories. She clearly explains that her mind selectively blocks unwanted memories yet stores joyful moments from Hailsham at total recall level (Ishiguro 2005, p. 72). Based on Caruth's 1996 theory memories of trauma don't follow a normal sequence and instead show up as broken snapshots. Kathy struggles to tell her life story because her mind tries to hide emotional trauma. These memory gaps intentionally reflect how she avoids dealing with the basic truths of her institutional life and personal existence. Through these split memories the story shows us how people manage rigid

ISSN: 3079-3319
Volume: 1,
Issue:(01)
January,2025

control by breaking down and warping their understanding of their surroundings.

Hailsham shaped Kathy's life by showing how memories and cultural learning together create personal identity. Kathy reflects, "We were different from the students at other places because we had grown up at Hailsham; we were special" (Ishiguro, 2005, p. 4). Clones feel strong from their special status yet this feeling serves to hide their real status as oppressed under the deceptive appearance of benefit. According to Lacan's thoughts on the Symbolic Order people experience how cultures shape their roles in society while also requiring them to obey (Lacan, 2006). Through art and creativity at Hailsham the clones experience limited freedom while the school continues to prepare them for organ donation. Through her ideal memories of Hailsham Kathy tries to create a sense of worth in a system that treats her as less than human.

As Kathy tells ordinary memories they begin to sound strange and unsettling. At that time they learned repeatedly from adults that their artwork displayed their inner being. (Ishiguro, 2005, p. 29) Under Hailsham guidance the students learned this belief because it combined humanity's principles with the simple aim to create productive clones. Freud (1919) explained how we feel unsettled when something our minds have hidden comes back to us in disturbing ways that make us uncomfortable. While the clones use their art to show they are human they also use it to make themselves easier to control. When Kathy thinks back on these events she experiences psychological conflict between knowing she is a living person and being treated like parts for an institution.

The book shows how memory exposes the ongoing battle between life instincts and death instincts within its characters' minds. As a nurse Kathy illustrates perfectly how our innate desires contrast with the grim aspects of our purpose. She shares that she made as many lasting moments as she could for the donors during her care time (Ishiguro 2005, p. 81). Through caregiving work Kathy takes her internal feelings and uses them to build caring relationships with others based on Freud's theory of sublimation (1920). Through her work as a caregiver she participates in an organization that decides when she must die. Through her story Kathy shows how human urges to survive and face death shape who she is as she works to protect and let go of life.

Kathy, Tommy and Ruth show us how memories and hidden trauma affect deep human connections. We simply never spoke about our emotions shared Kathy. Talking about feelings at Hailsham never followed normal patterns (Ishiguro, 2005, p. 120). Adult rules at the school enforced emotional control which became their normal way of life. According to Lacan the Imaginary Order shows that clones feel in control when their ability to be unique is taken away by their surroundings. Through her selective memories of her bonds Kathy tries to find purpose despite the fact that their lives as donors set rigid limits on their interactions.

The author uses language tricks throughout the story to emphasize that suppression rules the experience. Words like "completion" and "carer" mask the grim realities of death and servitude, normalizing the clones' exploitation. Our instructors continuously explained how donations operated but we did not discuss the reality among ourselves. Despite getting this information repeatedly it never became a topic of our group discussions (Ishiguro 2005, p. 114). People use softened terms to hide distressing facts about how things really work. Through their research Zhang and Lin (2021) demonstrate that this language control reduces clones to non-human status yet allows society to believe it conducts itself morally. Through her acceptance of the system's language Kathy shows how her buried memories uphold the mechanisms used to oppress society.

Throughout the novel artists use their craft to express themselves while authority figures use it to enforce their power. Kathy explains that making extra special artwork was mandatory. Our artwork required great effort because its importance stood above all (Ishiguro 2005, p. 32). According to Freud's sublimation theory people redirect their unrecognized urges into acceptable forms of expression (Freud, 1920). Though the art that clones create at Hailsham appears liberating it actually serves Hailsham's control over them when presented to outsiders. According to Smithson (2021) allowing clones to be creative shows a moral contradiction because they get individual rights while losing real self-control.

The novel shows the uncanny through how clones deal with people outside Hailsham. Kathy describes her encounter with Madame, saying, "I realized she was afraid of us in the same way someone might be afraid of spiders" (Ishiguro, 2005, p. 35). At this point the text shows how the clones' life appears disturbingly split between their human traits and their strange existence which makes people both care and worry about them. For Freud (1919) the uncanny exists when people struggle to distinguish between what they know well and what seems foreign creating collective

ISSN: 3079-3319
Volume: 1,
Issue:(01)
January,2025

unease with the existence of clones. Through her thoughts Kathy shows she understands her place on society's outskirts making the story's study of self and separation more impactful.

As a carer Kathy explains how memory helps people cope with their fear of life's meaninglessness. My mind returns to memories from my time at Hailsham. Those Hailsham times formed the happiest period of our existence. Through longing memories of better times Kathy finds strength to cope with her work of looking after donors at the end of their lives. According to Whitehead (2019) our mental endurance comes from remembering certain events because these memories help us develop life's significance. Through her reflections Kathy shows us that memories protect her thoughts yet also block painful realities from entering her mind.

The book shows how clones submit to their fate to ask important questions about how society shapes their behavior. Every day Kathy notices that the group never fought back or tried to escape their inevitable end. We just accepted it" (Ishiguro, 2005, p. 239). The group holds deep acceptance due to how systemic oppression teaches them not to think about resisting. According to Reynolds (2018) society conditions disadvantaged groups to believe they should remain underprivileged just like oppressed populations worldwide. Through her recollections of Hailsham Kathy shows us how mental conditioning creates complete obedience and power over thoughts.

Kathy's most powerful thoughts emerge when she remembers dying friends and she considers her role in seeing them through to death. She states, "I was thinking about the time I spent with Ruth and Tommy, all the memories we made together" (Ishiguro, 2005, p. 257). Through her memories of her friends she honors their existence and works through her sadness. According to Lee (2020) people use memories to deal with death while keeping inner emotional bonds alive. Through her memories Kathy shows how humanity can withstand transience in life.

In the story the consequences of cloning technology show us how scientific innovation competes with our ethical duties. Kathy's reflection, "We were model students at Hailsham, but we were never truly free" (Ishiguro, 2005, p. 88), highlights the paradox of granting education and culture to beings whose fundamental rights are denied. According to Zhang and Lin (2021) the book shows how society turns human life into products and pushes readers to rethink scientific moral guidelines. Through her memories Kathy shows how life in an ethically confusing system takes an emotional toll while making the book ask bigger questions about what it means to be human and just.

5. TRAUMA AND THE UNCANNY

In *Never Let Me Go* by Kazuo Ishiguro readers explore the powerful inner conflict between how the clones learn to live and their strange genetic destiny. According to Freud (1919) normal elements of life turn disturbing when they bring buried realities to light. Through her memories Kathy repeatedly discovers this mixture of understanding and mystery. During their time at Hailsham she never fully grasped why the guardians put so much importance on student artwork at that time (Ishiguro 2005 29). The simple memory becomes more disturbing when they find out their art was exploited to validate their lives. According to Freud buried fears become unnerving when they surface into awareness which Kathy understands when she connects her innocent activities with their dark reality.

Trauma appears between the lines of Kathy's memories because she tells her story in broken pieces and from a unique perspective. The memory of what Ruth said in Norfolk about how they were created from trash keeps resurfacing in my mind even though I don't understand why. Through this memory the clones display their heartache as they try to understand their human nature despite feeling less than others. Per Caruth (1996) events of trauma do not integrate with our conscious mind but erupt in broken pieces that defy clear storytelling. Through her constant return to this specific memory Kathy shows she has not worked through her emotional pain because she struggles to understand who she is and what they created her to be.

How the clones deal with people from outside their world makes their unsettling existence clearer. Kathy recalls Madame's reaction when she observed them dancing: "It was as if she were afraid of us, the way someone might be afraid of spiders" (Ishiguro, 2005, p. 35). People naturally connect with the clones because they look human yet they cause fear because they were created through genetic engineering. Through his theory of the uncanny Freud (1919) explains that feelings emerge when our minds face hidden realities that mix elements of life and death with the distinction between humans and other entities. Madame represents social anxiety over the clones because they make people question limits that comfort them.

ISSN: 3079-3319
Volume: 1,
Issue:(01)
January,2025

Through Kathy's work as a carer we can see how trauma affects her daily life. She states, "I tried to be there for them, to listen to their memories and help them prepare for what was coming" (Ishiguro, 2005, p. 81). Through caring for others Kathy manages her fears about death and puts this energy into being there for them. According to Freud (1920) redirecting hidden urges into proper behavior serves as sublimation. Through her actions Kathy creates a way to handle her fear about what must come. Her work shows how trauma affects everyone but makes her face the passing of people she loves.

Their relationships gain deeper mental insight because of the eerie feelings between the clones. Kathy remembers Tommy looking in disbelief at their everyday moments according to their recorded journey (Ishiguro, 2005, p. 103). The way Tommy maintains disbelief about their lives shows the basic conflict they experience in their thoughts. According to Lacan's 2006 concept the Real refers to elements that exist beyond our ability to interpret and place them into understood frameworks. When Tommy stares at the reality of their lives he displays a reaction to secrets that cannot be spoken which makes him feel deeply strange.

In the story art and creativity make the clones experience unsettling realities more strongly. Kathy recalls, "We were told and retold that our art was proof we had souls" (Ishiguro, 2005, p. 91). They first accept that their artworks show they possess souls yet this idea takes a negative turn when their artwork decides their human worth. According to Freud's 1919 theory people experience the uncanny when things designed to comfort them end up making them anxious. Through their artwork the clones hoped to show they were human but instead were used to reduce them to objects which twisted their dual existence into something unseemly.

Throughout the story Kathy continuously grapples with the hurt caused by society's exclusion. She explains "People from outside treated us as though we did not exist" according to her observations (Ishiguro 2005: 196). Despite experiencing human emotions like any person clones receive unfair treatment because people see them as something less than human. According to Zhang and Lin (2021) social discrimination against the clones reflects actual global patterns of institutional mistreatment. The memories Kathy shares show how rejection hurts the clones mentally since they live in a world that accepts yet denies their complete human rights.

Through Kathy's closing thoughts the book completes its study of the eerie. The recollections that mean most to me connect to something bigger than myself. My lasting memories exist because they connect to broader experiences (Ishiguro, 2005, p. 286). The recognition of shared memory shows how the clones face the same traumatic events together as a community and live them as individuals. Caruth (1996) believes trauma spreads through relationships by affecting individuals and their surrounding communities together. Kathy understands her memories belong to both her and something bigger which makes her embrace her life's strange combination of belonging and feeling apart.

6. THE DEATH DRIVE AND SUBLIMATION

Through Freud's idea of Thanatos as the death drive we can see why the characters in *Never Let Me Go* accept their destiny. Despite understanding their purpose as organ donors from the beginning the clones do not resist this end. Kathy talks about this acceptance when she explains "We all knew it. No matter how long we held this knowledge everyone seemed to keep quiet about it. People unconsciously accept harmful behaviors as shown by their silence analyzed by Freud as Thanatos behavior (1920). Kathy describes how deeply she has adopted social norms revealing death drive exists in her acceptance of daily habits.

Through her work as a carer Kathy demonstrates the use of sublimation in the story. I made every effort to support all my donor patients. In my work I made an effort to treat my donors as unique people instead of mere numbers. Her caring work helps her create purpose under oppressive conditions that treat her poorly. According to Freud's 1920 theory sublimation means taking repressed instincts and using them to benefit society. By helping others relieve their suffering Kathy fights against her fear of death because she finds meaning in her caregiving work. However, her role also highlights the paradox of her existence: She preserves life for just a brief time before she helps the system take life away.

Through Tommy's art we see how Eros and Thanatos conflict with one another. According to Kathy Tommy fully immersed himself in his artwork without worrying about people's reactions (Ishiguro, 2005, p. 153). Through his art Tommy uses his drive to live to show his unique identity against a harsh system that wants to remove it. According to Freud's 1920 study Eros defends life through connections while this principle drives Tommy to pursue his artistic

work. Though Tommy's art displays his deep inner strength the knowledge that authorities use it to validate his humanity results in deep tragic consequences of death instinct.

Through her longing to find love Ruth transforms deeper motives into acceptable activities. According to Kathy Ruth firmly believed understanding our full potential would explain our true nature (Ishiguro 2005 159). This fixation on "possibles" reflects Ruth's desire to create a narrative of purpose and connection amidst the dehumanizing reality of cloning. According to Freud (1915) sublimation works by turning our unmet emotional needs into goals that benefit society as a whole. Despite her inevitable death Mrs. H tasked herself with seeking identity and love yet remained trapped within the boundaries of her donor responsibilities.

The way Eros connects with Thanatos determines the essential nature of how the clones support each other to build purpose. Kathy reflects, "We found a kind of comfort in each other, a way of holding on when everything else was falling apart" (Ishiguro, 2005, p. 202). They help each other out because this matches how the life drive encourages people to stay connected and safe. When death becomes unavoidable it dims our connections between individuals who seek life and those who accept their fate. Lacan's 2006 analysis of Freud explains these conflicts as central aspects of our human nature.

Through her careful reflection Kathy demonstrates how sublimation functions across wider contexts. The memories I retained give me strength to move forward through life. The memories I store up make me realize that my life had good aspects too. By drawing strength from her memories Kathy uses sublimation to build a hopeful and purposeful story that stands against the harsh truth of her life. Through sublimation as defined by Freud (1920) people use their pain to create profound significance that excels beyond basic psychological defense. Through her memories Kathy shows her mental strength yet reveals how pointless her situation is.

The twins show Thanatos when they accept their assigned duties. Through her entire life none of us considered escaping or opposing our situation. We never refrained from following the routine path set before us (Ishiguro, 2005, p. 239). People accept self-harmful behaviors because their death drive takes control without them realizing it. According to Reynolds (2018) groups facing oppression submit to their fate in ways that reflect actual systems that force minority populations to accept their lower status. The clones mental state deteriorates due to their life path because they naturally accept and follow what society demands from them.

The book shows how art functions as a means for both life expression and death acceptance. Kathy recalls the importance placed on their artwork at Hailsham, stating, "It was proof we had souls" (Ishiguro, 2005, p. 91). Through their artwork the clones try to show who they are but this process proves how society sees them just as useful items needing proof of humanity to higher authorities. According to Smithson (2021) society encounters moral contradictions by allowing clones to show their unique personality while suppressing their freedom completely.

The clones reach their death drive conclusion by learning to accept their mortality. During Tommy's last moments Kathy sensed his inner peace as he reached a personal understanding of everything he had experienced before (Ishiguro, 2005, p. 281). This serenity represents how the characters fully accept their death drive because they have faced their coming death. According to Freud in 1920 nature drives humans towards an inorganic end yet Tommy proves this theory true through his peaceful acceptance. By accepting his fate he creates his own form of resistance since he controls his mindset in his last moments.

7. CONCLUSION

Through *Never Let Me Go* Kazuo Ishiguro studies how people emotionally and mentally deal with knowing their death date in advance. Using psychoanalytic theory this book shows how memories of trauma plus Eros and Thanatos energies influence the emotional world of Kathy Tommy and Ruth. According to Freud's death drive theory the characters mentally accept and go along with what destroys them. As they deal with their fear of dying Kathy cares for others, Tommy creates art and Ruth searches for who she is.

The book shows how strange the cloned subjects feel to readers because they seem both like us yet completely different. Using Freud's and Lacan's theories of psychoanalysis we see the striking difference between how the clones show human traits and how they are made to feel less than human which prompts readers to question the nature of personal identity. Through its art and creativity focus Hailsham shows how society both protects and restrains its students. The clones experience broken

memories and hidden pain just like many people who fight for freedom within controlling systems.

Never Let Me Go examines essential aspects of what it means to be human. Through the combination of death drive and sublimation the book shows how all humans deal with their instinct to create and their destined end. Through her memories Kathy shows us how remembering helps people withstand control and systems that try to suppress them. Through its mental insights and moral power the novel prompts readers to question our human nature the limitations of scientific research and how we establish life's purpose when facing death. By uniting academic concepts with human sentiment *Never Let Me Go* reveals truths beyond its story about clones revealing essential lessons about life and memory.

REFERENCES

Baker, T. (2019). *Hailsham as a microcosm: Indoctrination and identity in Kazuo Ishiguro's Never Let Me Go*. Journal of Literary Studies, 35(3), 78–92.

Caruth, C. (1996). *Unclaimed experience: Trauma, narrative, and history*. Johns Hopkins University Press.

Freud, S. (1915). *The unconscious*. In *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Volume XIV* (pp. 159–215). Hogarth Press.

Freud, S. (1920). *Beyond the pleasure principle*. In *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Volume XVIII* (pp. 1–64). Hogarth Press.

Freud, Sigmund. *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*. 1920.

Freud, Sigmund. *The Uncanny*. 1919.

Geiszler, R. (2020). *Memory and normalcy in dystopian narratives: A psychoanalytic reading of Never Let Me Go*. Memory Studies, 13(4), 512–528.

Graham, H. (2018). *The uncanny and the ethics of cloning in Never Let Me Go*. Ethical Studies in Literature, 24(2), 20–35.

Ishiguro, K. (2005). *Never Let Me Go*. Faber & Faber.

Lacan, J. (2006). *Ecrits: A selection* (B. Fink, Trans.). W. W. Norton & Company.

Lacan, Jacques. *Ecrits: A Selection*. Translated by Bruce Fink, 2006.

Lee, J. (2020). *Mortality and memory in dystopian literature: An analysis of Kazuo Ishiguro's Never Let Me Go*. Mortality, 25(1), 10–25.

Lukić, A. (2011). *The human condition in Kazuo Ishiguro's Never Let Me Go*. Philosophical Insights in Modern Literature, 14(3), 1–19.

McCarthy, L. (2022). *Caregiving and sublimation in dystopian contexts: Kathy as a carer in Never Let Me Go*. Psychoanalytic Perspectives, 33(1), 30–42.

Mendes, K., & Clarke, P. (2020). *The interplay of Eros and Thanatos in dystopian narratives: Kazuo Ishiguro's Never Let Me Go*. Psychoanalytic Literary Criticism Quarterly, 18(4), 105–120.

Reynolds, D. (2018). *Obedience and conformity in dystopian literature: The passive protagonists of Never Let Me Go*. Sociological Inquiry, 42(2), 70–85.

Smithson, R. (2021). *Art and identity in Never Let Me Go: Resistance through creativity*. Artistic Studies in Fiction, 29(3), 40–60.

Whitehead, A. (2019). *Trauma and silenced voices in Kazuo Ishiguro's Never Let Me Go*. Trauma Studies, 16(2), 50–62.

Zhang, L., & Lin, Y. (2021). *Cloning ethics and the commodification of life in Never Let Me Go*. Bioethics in Fiction, 27(1), 95–110.